

Message Text

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42

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 MC-01 ACDA-05 IO-10 NIC-01 NEA-09 /089 W

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R 291130Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6893

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PORT LOUIS

AMEMBASSY PARIS

CINCLANT NORFOLK VA

CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON ENG

COMIDEASTFOR

C O N F I D E N T I A L TANANARIVE 0179

DEPT PASS DIA

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS UR UK MA

SUBJECT: RUMOR RE SOVIET MIGS FOR MADAGASCAR

1. BRITISH AMBASSADOR CROSTHWAIT HAS, DURING DISCUSSION OF MALAGASY MILITARY PROCUREMENT FROM UK, MENTIONED RUMOR TO EFFECT THAT SOVIET GOVERNMENT HAS OFFERED MIGS TO MADAGASCAR. I TOLD HIM WE HAD HEARD NOTHING TO THIS EFFECT.

2. DATT SUBSEQUENTLY CHECKED THIS OUT WITH COMMANDER MALAGASY AIR FORCE, LT COL RAYMOND RAKOTONIRINA, WHO SAID HE HAD NEVER HEARD IT. ADDED HE INTERESTED IN REDUCING, RATHER THAN INCREASING TYPES OF AIRPLANES, IN FLEET.

3. COMMENTS: DATT BELIEVES AIR FORCE COMMANDER GIVING US STRAIGHT STORY. POSSIBLE HOWEVER THAT SUBJECT COULD HAGE BEEN DISCUSSED AT HIGHER LEVEL BETWEEN SOVIETS AND MALAGASY WITHOUT
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HIS BEING INFORMED.

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4. BOTH WE AND BRITISH AMBASSADOR ARE AWARE OF MALAGASY INTEREST IN POSSIBLE ACQUISITION OF INTERCEPTOR, PARTICULARLY AFTER TWO EMBARRASSING ILLEGAL DEPARTURES OF CIVILIAN AIRCRAFT FROM MADAGASCAR TWO OR THREE MONTHS AGO. THUS NOT EXCLUDED THAT MADAGASCAR MIGHT HAVE SOUNDED OUT SOVIETS ON ASSISTANCE TERMS FOR INTERCEPTOR.

5. NOR DOES IT SEEM EXCLUDED, IN VIEW EXPANDING SOVIET INTEREST IN INDIAN OCEAN AND FACT THAT SOVIET AMBASSADOR ALEKSEYEV WAS FORMERLY AMBASSADOR TO CUBA, THAT SOVIETS MIGHT RESPOND POSITIVELY. WOULD APPRECIATE MOSCOW COMMENT.
END COMMENTS.
MENDENHALL

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